

Ghita Therapy

The Marriage Jar

One of the best things I was ever taught at uni was by my professor Dr Jodie Bradnam, who taught the 'Love, Sex and Relationships' class.

Jodie taught me her secret for marriage and it really stuck with me. So much so, that I use it with my couples counselling clients.

Anyhow, the 'Marriage Jar' is a simple

concept that the mind can easily 'get.' It is amazing how this simple idea can adjust one's behaviour every day. Basically, it works like this: When you are first together, the jar is full. As time goes by, the jar empties. For every kind gesture, kiss, supportive comment, intimate moment, lunch pack made, etcetera, a marble goes in. For every sarcastic remark, episode of not listening or avoidance of connection, five marbles come out.



The "Marriage Jar" can even be a real jar. Some people put post-it notes of gratitude in for the other person. So that the partner knows they are appreciated and the little things do not go unnoticed. Notes that say, 'I love it when you bathe the kids without me asking.' 'You looked so hot the other night when we went out.' 'I was impressed at your skills changing my car battery.' 'Thanks for paying that parking fine.' These little notes can mean so much to a couple that are under financial strain, have little time for date nights, or have a multitude of pressures.

When a jar is running on empty for long periods, it cannot be sustained. One person will inevitably ditch, or release the pressure of conflict with a third party (cheating). These simple concepts are preventative measures. The marriage jar needs to be replenished regularly. It should be cherished and fed daily.

What else fills the marriage jar?

Kindness, thoughtfulness, appreciation, nurturing and encouragement are just a few things that can fill a marriage jar.

Say, "Thank you." Say, "I fancy you." Say, "I think you are beautiful."

Instead of noticing what your partner does not do, focus on the positives. We can't control another person, but we can reinforce behaviour that we like.

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